Dear Paul, 7/2/75

You are entitiled to an update on McDonald and I've been wanting to bring you up to the present situation on Post Mortem because of your interest in helping it.

I had a dual role in the McDonald matter. It turned out to be interesting in ways I'll not take time for now.

I will have a continuing personal interest for reasons that will become clear.

An old friend is Barney Rosset's lawyer, the fellow who took the I am Curious Yellow case to the Supreme Court. He knows of my JFK work. It is he who called to ask if I'd read the so-called "outline" for Rosset. I agreed. Thereafter someone at Grove Press called for confirmation and sent me a copy. The first two paragraphs told me the book is a fraud.

So, for the lawyer friend I had one function and for Grove another. I was frank with both, separately. I told the lawyer exactly what the score is, detail after detail, and I have the copy marked in even greater detail. It is totally impossible, except that I do not know who McDonald knew. However, even his story about how he got into the matter is spurious. And his account of the assassination, allegedly from the assassin, and of the second planned assassination, that of Oswald, are actually physically impossible.

My obligation with the lawyer was to tell him the truth. This extended to those who could possibly sue. Identification of some of the characters is quite possible. One is very much alive. Another has heirs. Both are libelled. If I were to represent either, a matter in which I would take no initiative or have any interest but I put it this way for explanation, it would be child's play to identify and lay a basis for suit.

For all practical purposes this is another spook "black book," the kind of overt fake that helps them and they often sponsor for their own kind of perverse P.R. It is therefore a bad book in this sense.

I do not know and I also have not been told what decision there has been. I was present for the end of the contract negotiations. The option time has expired or is about to. Probably hasn't yet but will by the time you get this.

I think the attractiveness is in the formula. Well, it is not an exclusive one so as a fake it is also worthless. Other similar phonies are now going around.

On the book itself the defects are multitudinous. In my second role I pointed out at the meeting what the book needs and what could be expected in promotions, especially in interviews and talk shows. These comments, of course, were helpful to McDonald and his people because they were correct and to the point. There will be enormous trouble with the book if it is printed even if these defects are corrected.

However, this, the public aspect of my work, was quite pleasing to McD and his. The private part I know nothing about. While I was with them the lawyer made no recommendation to Rosset. If he did not by the end of last week he won't be able to for a while because he left for a European vacation for a fortnight.

John Starr began very antagonistic and clearly frightened. The first part of the morning-long meeting was on the details of the contract. I was then silent and merely watched. I know John and these are unexaggerated descriptsions. When we got into the book itself I could not have been more honestax or forthright in what I said, ranging from what could be expected during promotional work and what it could do to the book and McD to its literary defects and lack of credibility and what had to be done to give it credibility. Here my responsibilities were to be impartial, to have no personal attitude to an anti-social fake but to fill the role of an expert consultant.

Starr, McDonald and their various lawyers warmed up to it and wound up appreciating what I'd said and done enough to be warm and thank me and ask for the help I offered. This included a fat file on the central if unnamed character other than the assassin. I told them how they could get it from an associate, Bonsterwald, and that if he did not give it to them to let me know. However, this also gives you an idea of how much work McDonald has actually done if he hasn't weitten to the Archives to get this stufff, which he can for a letter and a check.

After the meeting broke up and after we lunched separately, as I walked back to

my friend's office I told him another aspect, that if this fake appears and McDonald gets air time I'll have a field day with fariness-doctrine time because the book is so transparent a fake pretending to be factual. I did not feel it was appropriate for me in the sort of public role to go into this but it is an understatement. The faking is really quite amateurish. McD has an awareness of this. There may have been some kind of incident in which he spoke to somebody but he never got or accepted what he presents as a real confession from a real person and believed it. I tell you this because you have some kind of relationship with him and you should know.

There is no doubt in my mind that McDonald has no innocence in this faking.

I tell you this because I have the impression you have or think you have some kind of TV interest in his story.

In the course of the morning I came to learn more about McDonald and the characters in his book than I think he realizes. Bad vibes. Nothing good or evern commercially worhtwhile about any of it. Not even as a fake.Or a novel.

But these are not my concerns because I don't think anyone will go for that stuff except as a commercial fake or novel, which McD says he has no interest in.

In the course of the morning I became convinced that McD has or had some kind of CIA history. Not just the reference to military intelligence in his bio but CIA. If you know anything about this I'd be interested for the future.

As a final word on this, it is apparent that McD hasn't even read (or if he has, has not understood) the Warren Report. He knows virtually nothing about the actualities of the JFK assassination and is contempuous of the established fact.

His motive I can only guess. It can range from money to serving other interests.

There have been potential developments on Post Mortem I report in the event they can be helpful with your efforts to help.

A magazine that has been offered Wayne Chastain's work on the King assassination and did not like and would not go for it asked me about my own. I arranged to meet with them after the McDonald meeting. We were tgether until 2 a.m., the editor and managing editor and their writer on this subject.

Their opinion of Wayne's work is that it could not fight its way out of a paper bag. Wayne is my friend and I told them this and that I would not write anything in competition with him. I also told them that because of my relationship with Ray I would not now write anything new on that subject. However, I tola them there was much still knew and unknown in Frame-Up, specified some I thought could make a good story, and offered it to them. The rights have reverted to me. (As of today I woe all the rights to all my work.) If they have reached a decision they haven't told me and I haven't asked. I also told them of other possibilities where I also would not write. If they go for there I'll be hearing from them. (Someone from CBS was here all day yesterday on my Ray work, so your friends out there need not feel it is so anti-Establishmentarian. Another from CBS, a producer working on the JFK case, wanted to meet with me at a time that conflicted with the McD assignment so I asked him to call me later.That also is not as visualized out there but I don't know what you or I can do about the attitude.

During this long meeting we went into Post Mortem. I offered them first serial rights for a 5,000 print and other rights for more. They went for the book but they do not decide on other than editorial matters. They are to take the project up with management/ownership and be in touch. If they get a favorable decision it will be subject to examination of the material and the editor can't be here until as I recall two more weeks. However, they were clearly excited.

Thereare one of the sensational papers was in touch for two other reasons and sent a staffer here to work on them and examine into PM. That also lasted into the wee hours. He left excited about the book. Again the question is a policy decision. I made the same offers. This time the material was seen. I heard from him yesterday for more details on the content for a further report so as of now there has been no negative. The question there seems to be cost: can they get enough out of serial use to justify the cost. (They are strange people. Very successful but with all the success they have never syndicated abroad, where with this they could easily recover more than 100% of their cost.)

Here I have bad luck in timing. I have a good friend high editorially but without policy say. My friend will be on vacation for two more weeks.

When the CND producer comes I'll make the same proposal to him if by then I have no deal. It will save them a fortune but like all bureaucracies the problem will be to get someone in authority to realize it. They have already wasted more money than this would cost and have nothing but useless crap for it. However, they often find the kinds of values they seek in crap, so I don3t really know.

Today I am to have two visitors (one of the reasons I'll not be able to read and correct this). The first is the representative of a printer and the second two people from the Church committee.

Because the prospects for this work are no so good I've had to toy with the idea of going further into debt and I've been seeking other estimates. I can get the job done much cheaper out of Washington. Because of my listings in the standard indices I have also had another solicitaion where with a new process I amx sure I can get a cheaper price. The question is of quality. And, of course, cost. If the job is not a quality job I won't be abla to use it and still sell this kind of book. Time and promised samples will tell. A $10,000 figure now seems not impossible, subject to learnig what the deal really is. It does require a cheaper paper but I'm assured verbally it is of good quality.

With the Congressional committees I've taken no initiatives. I've responded to invitations. I've had no hopes for the House but did respond to two approaches. The situation there is still not politically promising. There are many I could have approached and haven t.

Basically, my feeling has been that I am well enough known for those with sincere interests to seek me out. This is no ego. It is my way of evaluating seriiusness. I used to work on the Hill and I know how it works.

I have an old friend who is a Member of the Church committee. I have stayed away from him on purpose, knowing him and his political problems. I knew that if and when he felt his obligations or his situation required him to be in touch with me I'd hear.

It happened last week. I was asked to go in before Friday. The Member had official duties abroad for two weeks and he left Friday. He wanted to be with me for part of the meeting. I walked to a commitee meeting with him and spent the rest of the morning with his staff member. We then had an arrangement whereby the staffer would come here the end of this week and the Member after he returned from abroad.

The staff is this excited: the man is coming today and bringing an associate with him.

Understand that neither the committee nor its staff are a monolith. Most of them on this subject have been seeing nuts. (I've been consulted on weeding some of thisput.)

As of now there is the possibility that what they want of Post Mortem may appear as a sort of equivalent of the Baker Report in the Watergate committee's work. There is a deal on confidentiality until the minute of the filing if this eventuates. This in itself can be very promising. If it means some becomes public domain.

This commitee is not going to investigate the JFK assassination. It will, if it finds just cause, recommend that there be a special committee or one of the standing ones assigned that job. If it happens, this can be the reason, and that should give enormous literary value to the work and the earlier works on which it would also draw.

While there was no stipulation of confidentiality on this I would rather regard it this way except for the degree to which you might want to communicate the possibities to those to whom you talk on this. Personally, I am without doubt that official use would increase the prospects enormously and that without it the prospects are very good because of the nature of the content, which is unique, and the changed attitude to the subject in general.

If the time comes for this official use and I've not been able tp print the book I'll still feel impelled to give the committee, through this Member, whatever he wants.

There has been a development which will probably inhibit my ability to go further into debt on this book. The small farm I own is about to be taken by the county in

which it is. I have been trying to sell it for years and wondered why when in the past I'd turned down large sums for it suddenly there could be no deal. It turns out that the bureaucrats decided it is what it is not, wetlands, and had decided to take it for this pseudo-ecological use.

This is at a cloverleaf on a major superhighway, so on that basis alone the decision is insane because of the potential industrial and commercial uses that could give employment and tax revenue.

I have been dealing with these people for a half year. They never told me anything and I learned of their plans and act only by accident. They even rezoned it without letting me know. There was to have been a county council meeting to decide on whether to proceed with the plans of which it is part and I was to have been told and they held it without telling me. There was to have been a tax remission pending decision and that also there was not. There was a soc-alled hearing last night. Only a single subordinate of the county executive was there. No single elected official. However, I went there and did make a record. I do not know what it can mean except in terms of future litigation, for which I did make a record. But I can't hire a lawyer, so that situation is bleak.

I'll not know anything until there is an appraisal. The prospects there are negligible because of the rezoning and the realities it means. They have taken a small farm and converted into a single-residence zoning, which amounts to confiscation with all the farm buildings to be demolished at great cost before it can be used for residential purposes.

I tell you all of this because it really means I probably will have to decide against extending my debt. That farm was, aside from the value of my literary rights, my one asset. Officials seems to have negated that asset for all practical purposes. I'll be fighting it as best I can and this is what I was doing last night.

Not knowing the law and not being able to research it and still do anything else, I'll probably have to attenpt to fight this as my own lawyer and on simple Constitutional grounds.

This may sound bleak and on the property it is, but the overall situation isn't except in terms of unthinking attitudes toward it. Even the LCN fear is irrational because the major thrust of the work is against the FBI. It is an unequalled expose of the FBI.

If the Church committee decides to do more than listen to the nuts they'll not do more than I've already done for them. This alone ought give enormous literary value to the work. And to other and not completed work that could be completed rapidly if I were relieved of the day-to-day chores.

In my suit against the FBI for the suppressed scientific evidence they have gone crazy in their effort to get the case dismissed on the basis of partial compliance, which would save them and gut the new FOIA law. The attitudes you have encountered may well keep those with real interests in the law detached. However, I am making one hell of a record in court papers. I have just prepred for filing the third of a series of powerful affidavits that charge serious offenses against the government, including perjury. I have made a record that under the federal rules precludes dismissal but there is the judge, a pro-FBI hack, to contend with.

To appear to be in compliance they have just dumped some 400 pages of documents and pictures until now secret on me. They hand-delivered them to my lawyer after the end of the working day. They should include a good story, which is not my major interest. The story could be "Secret FBI Tests Porve Oswald Innocent." From my lawyer's phoned description of his casual examination I know what they have given me. It is one part of these tests I specified I did not want (reason, cost, but they can't now charge for this!). Crazy? They have great power but they are also scared. I have already forced the early returement of the agent mostly involved in this, Frazier. And their only answer to my first and proven charge of perjury is to say to the court that I know more about the subject than anyone in the FBI. Look for this on a book cover, in facsimile! Sorry for the haste. I'm trying to inform so you can help better. Best,